RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 2%th July, 1988/6 *Sravana,* 1910 *(Saka)*

The Mouse met at eleven of the clock, '-. Chairman in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Effect of Population Growth on Development Process

*2L SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact Ihat according to the statistics available with Government, failure in checking the populaion growth rate would affect the development process of various programmes/schemes of Government;

(b) if so, wh;it steps have been taken by Government to check the growth fate of population; and

(c) what are tha fields which are like ly to be affected by this increase of po pulation growth rate?

HE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MIN-JTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMEN-TATION (SHRI BIREN STNGH EN-TI): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Excessive growth of population off-ets some of the benefits of development, necessities divergence of more resources for meeting the minimum needs of consumption and thus reduce ' the potential for raising the investible resource. This has the impact of slowing down the development process.

(b) The growth rate of population is sought to be curbed through a comprehensive family we1fare programme and socio-economic development.

The main features of the Family Welfare Programme at present are:—

(i) providing family planning aids/ services through country-wide net-work, of primary health care;

(ii) Special child survival programm es. *i.e.,* Universal Immunization Progra-mme Oral Rehydration Therapy, Prophylaxis against Nutritional Deficiencies etc. The Immunization Programme has been given a new impetus under the Technology Mission on Immunization;

(iii) providing 100 per cent coverage of immumza'ion to pregnant mothers by 1990;

(iv) trie Information, Education and Communication (IEG) programme, aiming at educating people about the benefits of SBoaD family and creating awareness about the methods of family planning and the services being offered;

(v) involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations and voluntary agencies in the programme. These programmes have been strengthened further during the Seventh Plan Besides these programmes, raising the status of women by providing them formal and informal education and job opportunities, and raising age at marriage are the imp-ortant objectives on social front.

(c) Some of the consequences of a high rate of growth of population are that it reduces the per capita availability of food

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Bhagatram Manhar.

adversely affects nutrition and health and puts excessive strain on basic amenities, housing and social services like health and education. It leads to fragmentation of holdings i_n agriculture and increase pres-sure of demand for work

SHRl BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Sir, the population of the country is growing ay by day. From 1981 to March 1988, be population growth was 10.64 crore. the rural and urban ratio comes to 60: to I would like to ask the Minister as o whether he is in touch with the Min- try of Health and Family Welfare. If so, what were the sterilisation targets fixed during the last five years and whether these have been achieved? If these targets have not been achieved, what are the reasons therefor and what sterilisation targets have been fixed for the next five years?

Further, I would like to know whether Government proposes to introduce certain schemes and programmes in which the States would be asked to give higher priority in various development schemes to those who accept the small family norm. If so, what are the details in this regard and what are the incentives proposed to be given to those who accept the small family norm?

SHRl BIREN SINGH ENGTI: PopuL-i ion is a serious problem in our country. the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare have taken certain steps t_0 control the birth rate. Lots of measures have been taken by the Government like, in my statement I have said, giving family we!-lare benefits to the people, providing immunization facilities for children and pregnant women, also we have given some facilities and taken some steps like education, creating public awareness, raising the marriage age, giving some special status to women through formal and informal education, giving some job opportunities, etc. These are certain steps which we have taken so far to control population growth. But it is a fact that we have not been able to control it as we expected. There are lot of reasons for this. These schemes are implemented cent per cent through the State Governments So far as the finance is concerned, cent per cent finance is from Government of India, but these schemes are implemented solely through the State Government's machinery. Also there are So many other reasons. Earlier the birth rate had not increased so much, the population had not increased so much because the medical facilities were not available and the death rate wa_s so high. So the population was less. But after Independence, Government had taken certain steps, $certai_n$ welfare measures. It was only after the welfare schemes were implemented throughout the country that the death rate has gone down and the infant mortality rate also has come down. Now, about tie projection for the next five years, in the Planning Commission we have appointed a special expert committee. They have - gone into it and presented their views on population projection. . . *(Interruptions). . .*

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: What is this saga going on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please give the main recoiTunendaiions of the committee.

SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI: The honourable Member wanted to know what is the target, what is the plan, of tha Government.

SHRI A, G KULKARNI: It is quite enough now.. . . *{Interruptions).. .*

SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI : The honourable Member has r used many points. I am trying to give replies to some of them. Our projection for population is like t ft is: Birth rate. ....

. . . (Interruptions)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please maks the answer as short as possible You have taken quite a bit of time.... *(Interruptions)* .. .

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Sir, T don't get a reply as to what is the target for five years.. *(Interruptions). . .* Then, what incentives are they going to give to small families? He has mot replied to my question, Sir ---- *(Interruptions)* . ..

SHRI JAGESH DESAI : You ask a pointed question and get a reply.

... *(Interruptions)*...

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR: Sir, a conference was recently held in Delhi to review implementation of family welfare programmes. The conference was attended, by experts from the States and also from the Planning Commission^ I would like to ask the Minister what is the decision arrived at this conference about the check of population growth in the country and what steps are taken to implement the decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He wants to know the rate of growth which the committee holds to be at the present moment and the steps taken to control it.

SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI: Rate of growth is 25 per cent. Every year, 15 million.. . . *(Interruptions) . . .*

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY : Twenty-five per cent?. .. *(Interruptions)* .. .1 may lv:!p the Minister. It is 25 per cent per decade; it is not 25 per cent per year.

SHRl BIREN SINGH ENGTI: In a particular period, during 1971—81, it was 25 per cent. Every year our population is increasing by 15 million. a little over two per cent. The growth rate is two Per cent. So far as the Seventh Plan is concerned. Government have taken some measures which I have already explained to the ho nourable Member in my reply.

MR CHAIRMAN: You may circulate those recommendations.

SHRI SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY: The Prime Minister went *to* the United States and said that our population is one billion, and then he was questioned there. Government has got all the population figures -wrong.' And he also said that since be went abroad, the population had gone up ... *(Interruptions)* ..

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have called Mr. Bir Bhadra Pratap Singh. You answer his supplementary.

SHRI E1REN SINGH ENGTI: In my jeply I have said about the steps taken by the Government to control the population. In my statement also 1 have mentioned certain steps which the Government have taken.

SHRI A G. KUKARNI: We have understood everything now.

SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI : We are confident that if these schemes are fully implemented, definitely we can control the population. li it is not controlled, it would be a problem for all of us.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: Sir, I want reply on two counts. The growth of population has-eroded all gains of development because the food production in the last 30 years has doubled, but there has been no increase in per capita production because of the increase in population Now, the second debatable question is that the per capita income at fixed prices is constant, taking the 30 years of record, because of the growth of population. In spite of the technological progress and the rise in the standard of living, the argument is that the poor are growing poorer because the population growth has a multiplier effect on poverty. This is against our national objective. On this count the second problem is that the population growth has led to rackless exploitation of our national resources like forests and water.

- I would like to point out very specifically that the Government programmes lack conviction. These programmes are diverted towards the elitist urban groups, whereas the steep rise in population is in the rural areas. Now, the second problem is that the large work force employed in the family welfare programme is out of touch with the rural people and the rural surroundings and the problem lacks correct motivation,

MR. CHAIRMAN: Put your question please.

SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH: I would like to know what is being done in order to create correct motivation for this large work force which is being employed for the purpose? Lastly, I would. like to point out that even on the frame of technology, the Government has acc-epted and discarded a number of contra-

ceptive procedures leaving the common folk in confusion. So, I would like to know what he will do actually to create a correct motivation and correct canviction in those who are going to implement it.

have also been making it clear that it is the responsibility of die Bangladesh Government to convince the refugees that necessary conditions exist for them to return ia safety.

(c) A Bangladesh delegation consisting of their High Commissioner in India anu tribal leaders visited the refugee camps on Inly 11 to meet the reifuges. The refugees 'handed over a list of their demands to the team.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Sir, I would like to know whether the Minister is aware of the fact that there have been widespread killings, arson and loot in the hilly tracts of Bangladesh 09 the Chakmas since April 1986 and that too with the active connivance 'of the Government of Bangladesh.. Many of them had to fie-e from there and take shelter in Tripuia. The Amnesty International has also brought out certain facts on the atrocities perpetrated on them. There has been also a constant effort on the part of the Bangladesh Government to force resettlement colonisation of the majority community in the area which is being inhabited by this ethnic minority of Chakmas exactly in the similar way a_s the Sinhalese odonisation has bee_n done in the Tamil areas in Sri Lanka. May I know whether all these facts hav_e bee_n conveyed or have been brought to the notice of the Bangladesh Government and what i_s their reaction or response to these facts being mentioned to them?

SHRl P. V. NARASIMHA RAO: S:r, not only all these facts are known to the Government of Bangladesh but they have been promising time and again that they would restore conditions of safety and security for the Chakma refugees to go back. Sir, there are more than 50,000 of them,. N_0 one would like to leave his hearth and home and go to another country to settle there even temporarily unless there are compelling reasons. As the House is probably aware lost use

MR CHAIRMAN : He is asking as out child marriages. What are you doing to prevent child marriages?

SHRI BIREN SINGH ENGTI: We cannot enforce anything. It is a social prob-

refugees, who have become a burden, to us although, on humanitarian grounds we have been keeping them, go back.. I had a lung talk with President Ershad and I may inform the House ... *(Interruptions), .that* he was very categorical... *(Interruptions)*.. .He very ' clearly said that he accepted the responsibility fo_r the return of all the refugees whatever their number might be. These were his very words. There has been some confusion about the numbers. They have not been forthcoming and they have been saying that the' numbers that we say have not been fully verified. Verification or no verification, the President was very categorical in his. statement that he wants to take all of I I repeat, all of them, whatever their number be. He also said that he would oversee .this issue personally and that he would appoint immediately one of his Minister; to head a team to go and meet these peo-^ pie, convince them and see that a* quickly as possible they are enabled to return to their homes. I came away satisfied and reported the matter to the Prime Minister. Some days ago, about the 4th o_r 5th of July, the Bangladesh High Commissioner called on me and told mi that he was going to meet the refugees on the 11th. Now, I was a little taken aback because I could not have imagined that what was decided or what was communicated through me to the Prime Minister on the 17th August 1987 would be hanging fire for more than eleven months. But thought it ftnt they were making very pucca kind of arrangements on the other side and so they might have taken some more time although it is an inordinate delay by any standards. They went there. And I am sorry to say, Sir, that we have not heard anything di-ectly from the|m. What they seem to have done is, after having gone there, they wen: back to Dhaka. They gave a statement. The Bangladesh Foreign Secretary gave a public statement, press statement, saying that the Chakmas are very willing to'come but som_c handful of Shanti Bahini people are

SHRl GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: The Chair has been threatened the way it has been done. A reflection is being cast. I demand the remarks to be expunged. It is a reflection on the Chair.. .. *{Interruptions)* ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: You see, we spent 16 minutes on one question I saw that the lupplementaries were such which should have been directed to the Minister for Health and Family Planning. That is way. . .

SHRI A, G KULKARNI : Sir, what about 'he economic content of planning for population? The Minister has not replied to this point. He spoke only on health matters You are carried away by his reply. W; want to know, what is the planniiv; priority.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have (old yon on behalf of the Planning Minister that he is providing money for different schemes and those schemes are to be implemented by the State Governments and other things are to be implemen'ed by the Health Ministry. Already we spent 16 min ntes on this question. Other questions are as important as the first one.

. . . (*Interruptions) . . .*

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: Sir, it is very important and want to have Half an Hour Discussion on this, *{Interruptions).*

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA: Sir during the last Session, we had a special discussion on family planning initiated by me and only ten Members were present at 'hat time. They always ask for ussion but when the discussion takes :e, nobody is present. *{Interruptions)-*

SHRT A. G. KULKARNI: We .are int-ted in economic question and not in Upendra's question. *{Interruptions).*

SHRI VITHALRAO MADHAVRAO JADHAV: We request Half an Hour Discussion on this question. *{Interruptions)-*

MR. CHAIRMAN: So far as flu's is concerned, it has been settled that tha Committee's recommenda'ions, their gist will be circulated. He has' said that the vnoney is being provided by the Centre for different schemes which are to be implemented by various State Governments. Now as to what methods are to be adopted and then there was a question about child marriage, again there is a law and all of you were restless when the question was being answered. Then I always get the complaint that I give so much time. I gave 16 minutes to this question and ' five minutes to this discussion.. . . *{Interruptions) . . .*

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY: We are exercised because family planing programme has failed. *{Interruptions).*

MR, CHAIRMAN: Just as there is indulgence for maiden speech, there should be indulgence for maiden answer.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY : That is very good, Sir. We are all exercised because family planning in this country has failed in spite of heavy expenditure incurred for that. Therefore, we are all concerned about this ' Therefore, .there is a demand for the debate from all quarter- here I plead with you. you may allow another discussion on family planning programme.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will be meeting at 4 o' clock and whatever is to be done, we will decide. Now let us move on to the next question. Q, No 22

Repartriation of Chakma Refugees

*22 SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any fresh steps for the repatriation of Chakma refugees now being lodged in Tripura;

(b) whether there have be^n bilateral discussions between th^ Governments of India and Bangladash on this issue recently; and

(c) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and *(b)* Government have been main'aining continuous contact with the Bangladesh Government to be suade them to take the necessary steps to create conditions in the Chittagong- Hill Tracts which would give tfie refugees the confidence to return to their homes voluntarily. We